

"I Was Only 19, Redgum"

Mum and Dad and Danny saw the passing
Out parade at Puckapunyal
It was a long march from cadets
The sixth battalion was the next to tour and it was
me who drew the card
We did Canungra and Shoalwater before we left

And Townsville lined the footpaths
As we marched down to the quay
This clipping from the paper
Shows us young and strong and clean
And there's me in me slouch hat with me SLR and
greens
God help me - I was only nineteen

From Vung Tau riding Chinooks to the dust at Nui
Dat
I'd been in and out of choppers now for months
And we made our tents a home
V.B. and pinups on the lockers
And an Asian Orange sunset through the scrub

And can you tell me, doctor, why I still can't get to
sleep?
And night time's just a jungle dark and a barking
M16?
And what's this rash that comes and goes
Can you tell me what it means?
God help me - I was only nineteen

A four week operation
When each step can mean your last one on two
legs
It was a war within yourself
But you wouldn't let your mates down
'Til they had you dusted off
So you closed your eyes and thought about
somethin' else

And then someone yelled out "Contact"
And the bloke behind me swore
We hooked in there for hours
Then a God almighty roar
And Frankie kicked a mine
The day that mankind kicked the moon
God help me - he was goin' home in June

And I can still see Frankie
Drinkin' tinnies in the Grand Hotel
On a thirty-six hour rec. leave in Vung Tau
And I can still hear Frankie, lying screaming in
the jungle
'Til the morphine came and killed the bloody row

And the ANZAC legends didn't mention mud and
blood and tears
And the stories that my father told me never
seemed quite real
I caught some pieces in my back that I didn't even
feel
God help me - I was only nineteen

And can you tell me, doctor, why I still can't get to
sleep?
And why the Channel Seven chopper chills me to
my feet?
And what's this rash that comes and goes
Can you tell me what it means?
God help me, I was only nineteen